



NEWS

*New York State
Public Employees Federation
AFL-CIO*

Contact: Darcy Wells
518-785-1900, ext. 277
518-859-1274
email: dwells@pef.org

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PEF Statement on Mandated Vaccination

Albany - "The New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF) is opposed to the emergency regulation mandating certain health care providers, as a condition of employment, be vaccinated against the seasonal influenza and H1N1 (swine flu) virus," said PEF President Ken Brynien.

"Vaccination for influenza is not as effective in the control of disease as vaccination for diseases such as polio, measles, and mumps. The safety of the H1N1 vaccine has not been as thoroughly established.

"Vaccination for influenza should be voluntary with emphasis on educational campaigns and enhanced infection-control programs including measures such as use of N-95 or higher respirators and other personal protective equipment as recommended by OSHA, CDC, and the Institute of Medicine.

"No other state mandates vaccination for influenza, nor has the federal government done so. New York health care workers should not be used to test an unproven policy.

"Reports from facilities that have implemented mandatory vaccination programs have shown that rather than being mandated to be vaccinated, a number of employees have retired or been fired. There is already a critical shortage of nurses. This regulation will only exacerbate the shortage.

"We are urging Department of Health Commissioner Richard Daines to rescind the emergency regulation and instead promulgate a regulation requiring all health care employers to offer voluntary vaccination programs with a strong educational component," Brynien said.

PEF is the state's second-largest state-employee union, representing 59,000 professional, scientific and technical employees of New York State, and other public and private employers.

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